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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/12/2017
TAGS: [IV](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT GBAGBO AGREES TO INTERNATIONAL
INVESTIGATION OF ATTACK ON PM SORO

Classified By: Ambassador Aubrey Hooks for reasons 1.4 b/d.

[¶1.](#) (C) In a meeting with the Ambassador on July 11, President Gbagbo stated that he had agreed to an international investigation of the attempt on PM Soro's life "in order to make the Prime Minister happy." To have objected to the investigation would have encouraged unnecessary suspicion in the PM's camp. President Gbagbo pointed out, however, that only the investigation by an Ivorian magistrate had any legal standing in terms of pursuing those responsible for the attack.

[¶2.](#) (C) President Gbagbo also confirmed that he will participate in the Flame of Peace burning of weapons in Bouake on July 30, originally scheduled for July 5. He downplayed any increased security risk, noting that only the PM had been targeted in the attack.

[¶3.](#) (C) President Gbagbo emphasized that he and the PM are determined to keep the peace process moving forward. While he acknowledged that some civil servants will see the attempt on the PM's life as a symptom of insecurity, he maintained that he and the PM will seek to reassure them about their security. From his perspective, the attack on the PM may help to draw him and the PM even closer together.

[¶4.](#) (C) Referring to presidential elections in 2008, President Gbagbo smiled and commented that the opposition was in disarray. He noted that there is increased shifting from one party to the other. That is politics, he noted, and reminisced that his own party suffered a number of defections in 1995 when he declined to run against Bedie. People go wherever their interests take them, he commented, and the clever politician has to persuade talented people that their interests are best served by joining forces with him.

[¶5.](#) (C) COMMENT: President Gbagbo was reasonably upbeat, although recovering from a cold which he said was debilitating and sapped his energy. He is currently following a doctor-prescribed diet to lose weight in order to reduce his high blood pressure; he has already dropped from 106 kilos to 97 kilos, and intends to lose seven more kilos to bring his weight down to 90 kilos.

HOOKS